(b) Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd.—Vishakhapatnam Steel Plant (RINL-VSP) has earned a net profit of Rs. 521 crores during the year 2002-2003. It has also registered a net profit of Rs. 465 crores (Provisional) during the Ist half of the current year i.e. 2003-2004.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) During the year 2001-2002, RINL-VSP suffered a net loss of Rs. 75 crores.

Reducing exports of steel to USA

1994. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the US is putting pressure on the Government of India to restrain Indian steel companies from exporting too much steel and steel products to the US market, despite the fact Indian exports are well within the specified limit;

(b) if so, the response of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government have made any efforts to reduce the export of steel to the USA; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Increasing steel prices

†1995. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 479 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 5th December, 2003 and state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether Government have assessed and reviewed the effect of the increasing prices of steel on the construction industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this upward movement is adversely affecting several consuming industries which might ultimately affect the export of steel and steel products to the foreign market; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to stabilise the steel prices in the overall interest of the economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) and (b) The Government has examined the representations from the construction industry regarding the adverse impact of increasing steel prices. In a deregulated and liberalised environment, prices are determined by the free interplay of market forces. Nevertheless, as a measure of import facilitation, the Government has removed 33 steel items from the purview of DGFT Notification No. 44 with effect from 28th October 2003. Inclusion of steel items into the DGFT Notification No. 44 required the exporters of these steel items to India to register themselves with the Bureau of Indian Standards and was being viewed as a non-tariff barrier. Prices of steel items that reached a peak in August 2003 have subsequently stabilised.

(c) The recent upswing in steel prices has had the effect of reducing the profit margins of downstream consumer industries. However, the import facilitation as a result of withdrawal of steel items from the purview of DGFT Notification No. 44 has provided the option to downstream steel consumers to source their requirements through imports. Exporters can also avail of the Advance license route for importing their inputs at zero custom duty.

(d) In a deregulated environment, prices are determined by the free interplay of forces of demand and supply. Government does not intervene in the market to influence prices.

Merger of Nilachal Ispat Nigam Ltd. with Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited

1996. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state: